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Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session

Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly

Letter dated 24 July 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session of the Assembly of a supplementary item entitled "Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States". The Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) is an intergovernmental organization with 16 members (Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, the Gambia, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, the Niger, Senegal, Somalia, the Sudan and Tunisia).

Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, this request is accompanied by an explanatory memorandum and a related draft resolution (see annexes I and II).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annexes circulated as a document of the General Assembly.

(*Signed*) Elfatih Mohamed Ahmed **Erwa**
Permanent Representative

01-47320 (E) 030801 030801

Annex I to the letter dated 24 July 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Explanatory memorandum

Community of Sahelo-Saharan States

I. General overview

1. The Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) was established on 4 February 1998 by a conference held in Tripoli, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, of the leaders and heads of State of Burkina Faso, Chad, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, the Niger and the Sudan.

2. The Central African Republic, Djibouti, Eritrea, the Gambia and Senegal joined the Community at the conference of heads of State of CEN-SAD held in N'Djamena, Chad, on 4 and 5 February 2000.

3. At the third regular session of the CEN-SAD Council of Heads of State, held in Khartoum on 12 and 13 February 2001, Egypt, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia and Tunisia also joined the Community.

II. Purposes and principles

4. The preamble to the Treaty establishing the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States affirms the determination of the States members of CEN-SAD to satisfy the wish for economic, cultural, political and social integration in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the 1991 Abuja Treaty and the constitutive documents of the regional organizations to which its member States belong.

5. Article 1 of the Treaty establishing the Community refers to the establishment of an overall economic union based on the implementation of a strategy by means of development plans that are complementary to the national development plans of member States and that include investment in the agricultural, industrial, social and cultural fields and in energy, and it looks towards the financial future of the Community with every confidence.

6. All obstacles to unity among member States are to be eliminated by:

(a) Facilitating the free movement of persons and capital and promoting the interests of the citizens of member States;

(b) Ensuring freedom of residence, employment, ownership and economic activity;

(c) Ensuring the free movement of goods and commodities of local origin as well as of services.

7. External trade is to be stimulated by the formulation and implementation of an investment policy for member States.

8. Increased provision is to be made for surface, air and maritime transport links between member States through the implementation of joint projects.

9. Member States are to reach agreement on giving citizens of other member States the same rights, privileges and duties as their own, in accordance with their respective constitutions.

10. Educational systems at all levels are to be harmonized and there is to be coordination in the cultural, scientific and technical fields.

III. Organs

11. In order to promote the purposes and principles proclaimed by member States, article 4 of the CEN-SAD Treaty establishes the following organs:

(a) The **Council of Heads of State**, consisting of the leaders and heads of State of the Community. It has supreme authority over the various institutions and makes decisions relating to general policy for the implementation of the Treaty and the achievement of its objectives. It approves the decisions of the other organs and provides them with guidance in the implementation of its own decisions, and it decides the matters referred to it by the Executive Council and the Secretariat. It issues the decisions, regulations and instructions necessary to achieve the goals and implement the programmes of the Community. The Council of Heads of State meets once a year and its presidency rotates among the capitals of member States. It may hold extraordinary meetings at the request of any of its members;

(b) The **Executive Council**, consisting of a number of ministers (or secretaries of General People's Committees) from member States. The Council formulates the complementary programmes and plans, implements the decisions of the Council of Heads of State, and prepares for the sessions of the latter and, in cooperation with the Secretariat, draws up its provisional agenda. It gives effect to the conclusions and recommendations of the special ministerial councils and submits them to the Council of Heads of State for approval;

(c) The **Secretariat**, whose functions and seat are to be determined by the Council of Heads of State. It is entrusted with the task of monitoring the achievement of the objectives set by the Executive Council and supervising the work of its institutions;

(d) The **Development Bank**, whose functions will be determined by the Executive Council;

(e) The **Economic, Social and Cultural Council**, whose functions will be determined by the Executive Council.

12. Under its article 5, the Treaty was to enter into force on the date of its ratification by the signatory States in accordance with their respective procedures.

IV. International relations

13. The Community will endeavour to establish a comprehensive network of relationships within the international community. At the thirty-sixth session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in Lomé in July 2000, the Community was granted the status of a regional economic grouping.

14. CEN-SAD has concluded partnership and cooperation agreements with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel.

V. Benefits of observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly

15. The CEN-SAD Council of Heads of State has taken note with satisfaction the partnership and cooperation agreements mentioned in section IV above and has requested the Secretary-General of the Community to pursue a policy of outreach and of practical partnership with regional economic groupings, intergovernmental organizations and corporations in Africa or elsewhere in order to bolster the Community's activities for the enhancement of economic and social development.

16. In this light, observer status for the Community in the General Assembly would greatly enhance future cooperation and ensure more effective results. For both organizations, observer status for CEN-SAD would enhance and strengthen their efforts in the economic development fields.

Annex II to the letter dated 24 July 2001 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Draft resolution

Observer status for the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States in the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Considering the importance of the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, an intergovernmental organization that addresses the common interests of its members and takes account of the divers links that unite their peoples, and given its determination to confront the factors that have caused economic backwardness and instability in its member States, its conviction that joint action in a framework of complementarity is the best way to integrate its countries and peoples, its commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Sahelo-Saharan region, and its determination to satisfy the wish for economic, cultural, political and social integration in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Charter of the Organization of African Unity, the Charter of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the 1991 Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (Abuja Treaty) and the constitutive documents of the regional organizations to which its member States belong,

Considering also the need, frequently noted by the United Nations, to promote and support every effort towards the development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation on the basis of international law,

Noting that the Treaty establishing the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States stresses regional cooperation as part of the process of achieving African unity on the basis of human rights and fundamental freedoms and the promotion of social justice and stability,

Wishing to promote cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States,

1. *Decides* to invite the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States to participate in the sessions and work of the General Assembly in the capacity of observer;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the necessary action to implement the present resolution.